



Noxious Times

a quarterly publication of the California Interagency Noxious Weed Coordinating Committee

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State Assemblyman Rico Oller Holds Hearings on Yellow Starthistle



On December 8, 1998, hearings were held in the State Capitol building by State Assemblyman Thomas "Rico" Oller (R-4th District). Oller had called the hearings to address the growing and devastating problem that starthistle represents. The hearings consisted of testimony by many weed control experts, advocates, Cattlemen and other landowners whose lands are being impacted.

Highlights of the hearings were:

- John Randall (Nature Conservancy), Jake Sigg (CA Native Plant Society), and Mike Pitcairn (CA Exotic Plant Pest Council) described the toll of exotic weeds on native plants and ecosystems.
- Joe Ditomaso (UC Davis), Ray Caruthers (USDA-ARS), and Nate Dechoretz (CA Dept. Food & Ag) talked about treatment options available to land managers.
- Karl Bishop, Jerry Howard, and Bill Snodgrass, (Agricultural Commissioners) talked about impacts in their counties and possible solutions, such as local Weed Management Areas.
- Ann Knox (BLM) and Larry Shields (CalTrans) represented their agencies' interests.
- Ken Zimmerman, Dick O'Sullivan, and other Cattlemen talked about the progression of yellow starthistle on their properties over the past 20 years.
- Tom Randolph (CA Dept. of Forestry) presented the Strategic Plan for Noxious Weed Control, put together for the Range Management Advisory Committee (see article on page 4).

Assemblyman Oller summed up the hearings by committing himself and his staff to follow up with efforts to investigate how CalTrans and CA Department of Food & Ag could do more to solve the problem. He also said that there would be some sort of legislation to follow. He emphasized his support for money to go out to the local level, rather than create more governmental bureaucracy. ❖

CINWCC Signatory Agencies and Representatives

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Chairman's Message: Nate Dechoretz

The spread of noxious weeds in the United States has been described as a "biological wildfire raging out of control." If we all agree that this is an accurate assessment of the situation California, then understanding and applying many principles of modern wildfire management can be beneficial in developing an effective noxious weed management program. Dr. Steven A. Dewey, extension weed specialist for Utah State University was probably the first weed scientist to recognize the similarities between wildfire management and noxious weed management.

Prevention is considered the first line of defense in the wildfire management and as such receives the highest priority by those responsible for protecting our natural resources. The same priority should be true for noxious weed management. As described in the last issue of Noxious Times, the Department of Food Agriculture's noxious weed program emphasizes prevention as the most effective approach to dealing with noxious weeds and other invasive exotic pests. The old saying an "ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" applies perfectly to both approaches.

Noxious weed prevention requires priority be placed on preserving and protecting areas not presently infested. To be successful in this endeavor, we must make a strong commitment to education and outreach. Effective noxious weed management requires support from the public, legislators and agencies administrators. Education and outreach will be needed to develop that broad based support. ❖

Noxious Times is a publication of the California Interagency Noxious Weed Coordinating Committee. The committee was formed in 1995 when 14 federal, state, and county agencies came together under a Memorandum of Understanding to coordinate the management of noxious weeds. The committee's mission is to facilitate, promote, and coordinate the establishment of an Integrated Pest Management partnership between public and private land managers toward the eradication and control of noxious weeds on federal and state lands and on private lands adjacent to public lands.

The *Noxious Times* newsletter intends to help the committee achieve its goals of coordination and exchange of information by providing land managers throughout the state with information on weed control efforts, news, and successes.

Noxious Times is published quarterly by staff of the Integrated Pest Control Branch at the California Department of Food and Agriculture. We welcome submissions for our upcoming issues. Please send to: CA Department of Food and Agriculture, ATTN: Noxious Times, 1220 N Street, Room A-357, Sacramento, CA 95814 or e-mail: noxtimes@cdfa.ca.gov

If you have a colleague whose name you would like to add to our mailing list, please send mailing information to the address above.

Noxious Times Editorial Staff: Pat Akers, Carri Benefield, Bonnie Hoffman, and Steve Schoenig
Text written by editorial staff unless otherwise noted.

City of Richmond Redefines "Weed"

In an initiative that may be the first of its kind in California, the Richmond City Council this past winter amended its Weed Abatement ordinance to include invasive exotic plants as "weeds." The amendment to the ordinance (Richmond Municipal code Chapter 9.50) specifically defines invasive exotic plants as "weeds," declares them a public nuisance, and provides for abatement

procedures. The amendment also defines "invasive exotic species," elucidating the impact aggressive, foreign plants can have on a native ecosystem.

The original ordinance, authored more than 25 years ago, narrowly defined "weed" as: "a plant with wingy or downy seeds, that poses a fire threat, or that by nature is caustic or noxious, for

example poison oak." As concern increased in recent years over the spread of invasive exotic plants, it became clear that the standing definition did not take into consideration the very real threat invading weedy plants pose, particularly to parks and wildlands.

The push to amend the Weed Abatement ordinance grew out of Councilman Tom Butt's interest in protecting "urban" native plant habitats from being destroyed by invasive exotics. Butt, who is also an architect and amateur horticulturist, had the personal experience of reclaiming several acres of his own property from a mature stand of French Broom and restoring it to its original coastal prairie ecosystem. After drafting the amendment, he worked with Parks Superintendent Tony Norris to finalize the proposed changes. Support from local chapters of the California Native Plant Society and the Sierra Club carried the amendment to passage by the City Council in December of 1997.

The amended Weed Abatement ordinance is likely to benefit surrounding parks and wildlands as the city now has the authority to enforce control of invasive species on private land. Councilman Butt explains that many of the city's largest private landholders are proximate or adjacent to large wildland parks. The invasive exotics on private lands constitute a formidable seed bank that continually assault parklands despite preventative and maintenance efforts by park agencies. Under the new definition of "weed," the city would be able to take action against these invasives that pose an ecological threat to wildlands.

The amendment is an important step in strengthening the city's ability to protect the area from plant invasions and may serve as a guide for other California municipalities looking to institute similar changes. ♦

For more information contact Councilman Tom Butt, (510) 236-7435, tom.butt@intres.com

CalEPPC – Volunteer Experts and Expert Volunteers

The California Exotic Pest Plant Council (CalEPPC) was formed in 1992 by a small group of people professionally and personally concerned with the problems associated with invasive plant species. Since that time, CalEPPC has grown into one of the premier organizations dedicated to countering the threat posed by invasive exotic plants in California. The group focuses primarily on the weeds of natural wildlands and parks, however many of these invasive plants are also pests in other environments. CalEPPC can list among its accomplishments:

- An annual symposium, with published proceedings, which draws over 300 people
- An excellent newsletter, - The CalEPPC News
- The List of Exotic Pest Plants of Greatest Ecological Concern in California
- Supplied speakers for meetings and conferences
- Administration and facilitation of weed research grants
- Resources and technical information on weed removal; this type of information will be featured in the upcoming CalEPPC book "Wildland Weeds of California"

In addition to members who are professionally tied to control of invasive exotic weeds, CalEPPC's biggest strength may be the dedicated "volunteers" who have taken on exotics removal and ecological restoration projects. These tireless workers have filled in many of the gaps that exist due to limited funding for management of publicly owned lands.

Become a member! CalEPPC is a publicly supported, non-profit organization that is supported mainly by its members and proceeds from its annual symposium. By becoming a CalEPPC member one can:

- Receive the CalEPPC News
- Be invited to CalEPPC's annual symposium
- Network with researchers, land managers, and local activists
- Participate in CalEPPC working groups

To find out more about CalEPPC and to receive a membership form contact:

CalEPPC Membership
c/o Sally Davis
32912 Calle del Tesoro
San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675

Range Management Advisory Committee Creates Draft Strategic Plan for Managing Noxious Weeds

A subcommittee of the Range Management Advisory Committee (RMAC) has drafted a California Strategic Plan for Managing Noxious Weeds as part of its duties to advise the Board of Forestry, Resources Agency, California Environmental Protection Agency, and California Department of Food and Agriculture. It is the only standing committee in the state government that addresses range issues. The Noxious Weed Subcommittee of RMAC has recognized the increasing magnitude of the problems being caused by exotic and invasive weeds especially in rangeland habitats. They have tried to focus the plan on addressing the need

for local organizations to coordinate and cooperate in weed control. They recommend the formation of Cooperative Weed Management Areas, which are local groups of agency professionals, land-holders and other interested parties that meet regularly to form a regional management plan, promote weed management education, and share resources.

The Plan also addresses seven major issues critical to building a stronger and more successful statewide noxious weed management program:

- Organization and Leadership
- Coordination, Cooperation and Partnerships

- Awareness and Education
- Funding and Resources
- Mapping, Monitoring and Assessment
- Research and Technology
- Enforcement and Compliance

These issues were identified and discussed by the Range Management Advisory Committee's Noxious Weed Subcommittee at their November, 18th, 1998 meeting. It is hoped that the plan will be able to give guidance to both Departments and to also be a focal point for increasing monetary allocations for important weed control activities. The plan is still in a draft stage and is being given out for review to all interested parties. ♦

For more information on the Plan or the RMAC Committee call Tom Randolph, (916) 653-9449.

CALFED Non-native Invasive Species

The CALFED Bay-Delta Program was established to develop a long-term solution to the problems affecting the Bay-Delta system. Building on the spirit of cooperation reflected in the December 1994 Bay-Delta Accord, a group of state and federal agencies have come together to work cooperatively at developing and implementing a long-term comprehensive plan that will restore the ecological health and improve water management for beneficial uses of the Bay-Delta system.

The Ecosystem Restoration Program (ERP) is the principal Program component designed to restore the ecological health of the Bay-Delta ecosystem. The ERP represents one of the most ambitious and comprehensive ecosystem restoration projects ever undertaken in the United States. The goal of the ERP is to restore or mimic ecological processes and to increase and improve aquatic and terrestrial habitats to support stable, self-sustaining populations of diverse and valuable species.

As the CALFED agencies have come to recognize the threat nonnative invasive species represent to healthy ecosystems and restoration efforts, it has become apparent that they must address this environmental stressor as part of the restoration work. As part of the ERP, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has accepted the responsibility of developing, implementing, managing, and coordinating a non-native invasive species program in the San Francisco Bay-Delta estuary which will include terrestrial as well as aquatic species. This program, with the coordination of CALFED staff, agencies and interested stakeholders, will focus on the San Francisco Bay-Delta, the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers and their watersheds. The focus of this program will be on prevention, control and eradication of nonnative invasive species that negatively impact our ecosystems and restoration efforts.

An Agency Team and a Technical Team have been formed which will work on planning this program cooperatively. A Strategic Plan is currently in draft form and work on an Implementation Plan is just beginning. At the conclusion of this planning process, actual on-the-ground work, accomplished in part through a Solicitation for Proposals, will begin to address the nonnative invasive species and their impacts.

Kim Webb Contributed to this article. For more information contact her at kwebb@delta.dfg.ca.gov

Agenda for Upcoming CINWCC Meeting January 20, 1999 1-4:30 pm Plant Pest Diagnostics Lab Sacramento, CDFA

Introductions

Agency Reports

Ag Commissioners - Weed free forage, Nurseryman's project

BLM - Budget

USDA ARS - Tamarisk biocontrol

CDFA - Oller hearings, WMA's,

YST leading edge mapping project,

Purple Loostrike mapping and

eradication project, New *Noxious*

Times copy editor

Natural Resource Conservation Service

Funding programs; Plant materials lab, Partnership opportunities

Resource Conservation Districts

What are they?

Partnership opportunities

CalFed Nonnative Invasive Species

Program Overview

RMAC Strategic Plan

Feedback/Input

Minutes of the California Interagency Noxious Weed Coordinating Committee Meeting Ontario, CA October 2, 1998

*** The last statewide interagency meeting was held prior to the California Exotic Pest Plant Council's (CalEPPC) Annual Symposium in Ontario.

Agency Reports

CA Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA): (1) Mike Pitcairn reported on a biocontrol of weeds meeting held in Great Falls, MT. The border areas of the U.S. and Canada are forming a consortium to fund the biocontrol of weeds. (2) The Range Management Advisory Committee is preparing a Strategic Plan for weed Management (see article on page 4). (3) Representatives from Hunter-Liggett military base met recently with the head of the Corps of Engineers biocontrol program in Vicksburg, and CDFA staff. The base, covering roughly 186,000 acres, has extensive yellow starthistle infestations. The Department of Defense is committed to a multi-year clean-up effort on the base and is developing a plan of what needs exist for clean-up. (4) Nate Dechoretz proposed adding a section to CINWCC's MOU that would allow interested groups to sign as a "supporting group signatory." (5) A review committee will be convened to consider adding tamarisk to CDFA's noxious weed list. A letter from a constituent initiated the process of obtaining an official request for review.

USDA-Agricultural Research Service: (1) Ray Carruthers reported on the Clients Input Meeting (see article on page 11).

California Agricultural Commissioner's Association (CACASA): CACASA has been working with the nursery industry to address the legal sale of invasive plants.

Bureau of Land Management: The BLM was not granted their \$3.5 million add-on for this year's budget. Although it was in the Administration's budget, it was denied by Congress in July.

US Forest Service: The USFS reported

lack of funding for weed control, with the CA region receiving only \$100,000 for the year. Joanna Klines explained that although many forests have small or few infestations, funding is important to control and prevent incipient populations from expanding. Nate Dechoretz agreed to develop a draft letter to be used to lobby for increased funding for weed control work.

CA Department of Fish and Game: Due to reorganization of the department, Diana Hickson will likely no longer represent CDFG at the CINWCC meetings.

General Business

Development of Weed Management Areas. In encouraging the formation of WMAs, the importance of moving beyond the signing of the MOU and into action was emphasized. Steve Schoenig will begin work on creating a manual to guide leaders interested in forming a WMA, and Dale Schmidt added that modelling a new group's MOU after a similar, established agreement often speeds the signing process for some agencies.

Database/Newsletter Update. A hard-copy printout of the CalWeed database is available, and Steve Schoenig continues to attend meetings of land managers to increase awareness of the database. Also, CINWCC now has a brochure that describes the committee and its activities.

Californians for Alternatives to Toxics. CATS approached some offices of the BLM and CDFG requesting information on their pesticide applications. Nate Dechoretz recommended keeping good records so that information will be accessible, and Anne Knox offered to provide agencies with reference materials and rebuttals to CATS's anti-herbicide positions.

Creation of a Research Subcommittee. Nate Dechoretz reintroduced the idea of forming a research subcommittee to direct research, outreach,

and weed management. Specific projects need to be identified to secure funding, and it was agreed that nominees to the subcommittee need not be the CINWCC representatives but could come from WMA's or agency field staff. Ken Zimmerman suggested examining the possible economic uses of weeds to provide a management incentive; Jake Sigg suggested studying the problem of weed movement. ❖

UPDATE: Plant Protection Act Failed in 105th Congress

The Plant Protection Act, a bill that would have streamlined Federal plant quarantine laws and imposed stiffer penalties for smuggling plants into the U.S., has failed to pass in both the House and the Senate this session. Introduced in the House by Rep. Canady (R-FL), H.R. 3766 would have increased the power of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to control and prevent the entrance of invasive species into the U.S. A companion bill, S. 83, was introduced by Sen. Akaka (D-HI). In a House subcommittee meeting this May, Dr. Craig Reed, Acting Administrator of APHIS, voiced the USDA's support for the proposed legislation. Similar bills are likely to be reintroduced in the 106th Congress. Support for the legislation can be directed to the House and Senate Agriculture Committees, or through individual congressional representatives.

Profile Weed Control in

Each year millions of people visit and work in the National Parks of California. As they visit the Parks with their vehicles, camping gear, and machines, travelers and workers occasionally leave behind hitchhiking pests, including non-native invasive weeds. It's the duty of the National Park Service (NPS) to protect America's Parks from these destructive pests.

The Organic Act of 1916 established that the National Park Service must "...conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations." The Service's Natural Resources Management Guidelines (NPS-77) specify their policy for the management of exotic species. The guidelines direct the NPS to follow an ecosystem strategy based on integrated pest management (IPM), to obtain the best long-term, cost-effective results. IPM is a decision-making process using information on pest biology to determine the most effective control strategy. IPM was developed as an alternative to the heavy reliance on pesticides. The NPS emphasizes the use of alternatives to pesticides, although pesticides may be used as a last resort. The details of many NPS guidelines, including those for IPM, are available on the Internet at www.aqd.nps.gov/.

Although it must follow national guidelines, each National Park is able to tailor its weed-control programs to its specific needs, and it may call upon several regional and national resources to develop its plans. The NPS is organized into seven regions. The

Pacific West Region includes 59 parks (21 in California) and three support offices. The Pacific Great Basin Support Office is in San Francisco and provides technical assistance to parks in California and Nevada. Danette Woo (danette_woo@nps.gov) is the regional support person for non-native invasive weeds. Regional and national supervisors oversee IPM. The regional IPM coordinator works in the Columbia Cascades Support Office in Seattle, Washington, and national IPM supervisors work in Colorado and Washington, D.C. In addition, each Park designates a person to lead its programs in vegetation management and exotic plant control. Parks call upon these program leaders, the support office, and the regional and national IPM coordinators for assistance in developing and implementing their programs.

Most Parks address exotic species control in their resource management plans. In developing its management plan, each Park adheres to the general NPS mission and to the mission outlined in the legislation establishing that Park. In some cases, a Park develops a separate plan to address a specific issue, such as weeds, in more detail. Redwood National Park, for example, has written an Exotic Plant Management Plan and Environmental Assessment. That Plan included the creation of Web pages on exotic plants, with the dual objectives of informing the public and soliciting volunteers.

NPS policy also requires each Park to have an approved Integrated Pest Management Plan describing the NPS policies, state pest regulations, and enabling legislation that affect IPM decisions in the Park. The IPM Plan also describes major pests in the park and

provides an action plan for each pest being controlled. An NPS permit is required when using herbicides or pesticides. The regional IPM coordinators issue the pesticide use permits. According to the NPS IPM Fact Sheet, no NPS funds are earmarked for pest management, aside from the staff time provided for the regional and national IPM coordinators. However, the U. S. Forest Service annually provides several hundred thousand dollars for management of forest insects and diseases. These funds are distributed to about 20 parks.

Since the weed program for a Park reflects its needs as perceived by its managers, the variation between Parks can be substantial. For example, over the past two years, Pinnacles National Monument has spent approximately \$5,000 per year on exotic plant control, while Redwood National Park averages approximately \$55,000 annually.

Many parks compensate for small budgets by developing alternative sources of labor. Golden Gate National Recreation Area has a highly successful Habitat Restoration Program that is



the National Park Service

based on volunteers. Its program has been copied by other parks. At Redwood National Park, 80 to 90



Photo by John Randall

percent of the on-the-ground control work is carried out by prison inmates under the supervision of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, by crews from the California Conservation Corps and Youth Conservation Corps, and by other youth groups. Individual volunteers also work with the Park's exotic plant control specialist on small control projects, on record keeping, and on supervision of the crews listed above. By contrast,

Pinnacles National Monument has very few volunteers due to its remote location; most of its volunteers are park staff and their families.

Parks may also supplement their resources by working together with local groups or related agencies. Redwood National Park has developed informal partnerships with The Nature Conservancy, California Department of Transportation, Humboldt and Del Norte County Agricultural Commissioners' Offices, the Forest Service, Simpson Timber Company, and the University of California, Davis. Redwood National Park is, at present, seeking funding for a joint project with the Redwood Community Action Agency. Redwood National Park actively seeks partnering opportunities when exotic plants cross man-made boundaries. Working cooperatively with adjacent land managers has proven effective for managing invasive non-native plants. Each land manager contributes to the resolution of the situation and sharing information and experience, funding, staff, and supplies benefits all parties involved.

A few examples will illustrate the kinds of projects that different Parks have undertaken and the paths they take to achieve their goals.

Pinnacles National Monument

Pinnacles will be entering its third year of horehound (*Marrubium vulgare*) control. They have recorded all horehound locations using Global Positioning System (GPS) receivers and mapped the results. Park staff monitor each site for density and infested area prior to removing plant. Every other month from January to August all plants

are pulled on the sites. In January, 1999, Pinnacles will begin control of yellow starthistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*). Sites will again be recorded and mapped with GPS and measured for area and plant density. Most locations will receive treatments with the herbicide Transline, but very small patches and patches close to water will be pulled. Park staff will check sites once every other month after herbicide treatment and pull any survivors. The herbicide treatments will continue once a year for three years, and afterwards any plants that appear will be pulled. One larger infestation will be burned three years in a row, but otherwise it will receive similar treatment to all other sites. In addition to horehound and yellow starthistle, Pinnacles will add Mediterranean mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*) and *Brassica* spp. to its exotics control work plan in the year 2000. (Contact Eveline Martin, eveline_martin@nps.gov, for more information)

Golden Gate National Recreation Area & Point Reyes National Seashore

Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Point Reyes National Seashore have recently received \$601,000 in National Park Service funding for a joint three-year Cape-ivy (*Delairea odorata*) control project. The California Exotic Pest Plant Council rates Cape-ivy as an A-1 pest. This project will run from 1999 through 2001 and has multiple objectives: to stop the spread of approximately 265 discrete Cape-ivy populations within both parks;

continued on page 10

UPDATE: Local and Regional Weed

Siskiyou County Weed Management Area

Siskiyou County, *Pat Griffin (530) 841-4025*

A group of 20 agencies and organizations including federal, state, and local government. The MOU has been drafted and is out for signatures. The group has received a grant for \$15,000 from the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation to do spotted knapweed control on the Salmon River watershed.

Modoc County Weed Management Area

Modoc County, *Allison Sanger (530) 233-5811*

Newly forming group of agencies include federal, state, and local government and other interested parties. The final draft of their MOU is out for comments. The comments are due by Dec 31.

Lassen County Noxious Weed SWAT Team

Lassen County, *Carolyn Gibbs (530) 257-0456*

This group has just completed the signing of a new MOU that expands their focus from yellow starthistle control to include 25 additional noxious weeds found in the Lassen Co. area. Twenty-seven signatories now support the group. The SWAT Team recently received a BLM War on Weeds mini-grant to produce an educational flyer, and the group will work throughout the winter to prepare for Lassen County Noxious Weed Awareness Week this coming spring. The Weed Week is set to include educational events to raise awareness of noxious weeds, and will encourage community groups to adopt a local site and remove threatening weeds. The SWAT team has also established a Teletips phone line where residents can get free information on weed identification, location, and contacts to learn more about weed control.

Plumas-Sierra Noxious WEEDS Management Group

Plumas and Sierra Counties, *Karl Bishop and Suzanne Ebright (530) 283-6365*

This group met in the fall and completed the final draft of its MOU, which is now being signed. A grant proposal was submitted which, if funded, would provide funds to begin weed surveys and mapping of unknown sites in Plumas and Sierra counties. Three noxious weed brochures are set to be completed by early spring; focusing on yellow starthistle, Musk thistle, and the knapweeds, each brochure will help readers with identification and control. Also, brochures will include a mail-in form for individuals to report newly discovered weed infestations. Other projects include building noxious weed reference sections in two of the area's public libraries, developing information posters for possible use at Caltrans rest areas and the local County Fair, and discussing the problem of weed spread from the shipment of infested gravel.

San Francisco Peninsula – South Bay Restoration Workshop

San Mateo, Santa Clara Counties, *Karen Cotter (650) 329-8544*

The workshop on January 29 will have a discussion on formalizing a Weed Management Area for the region.

Big Sur Weed Management Area Committee

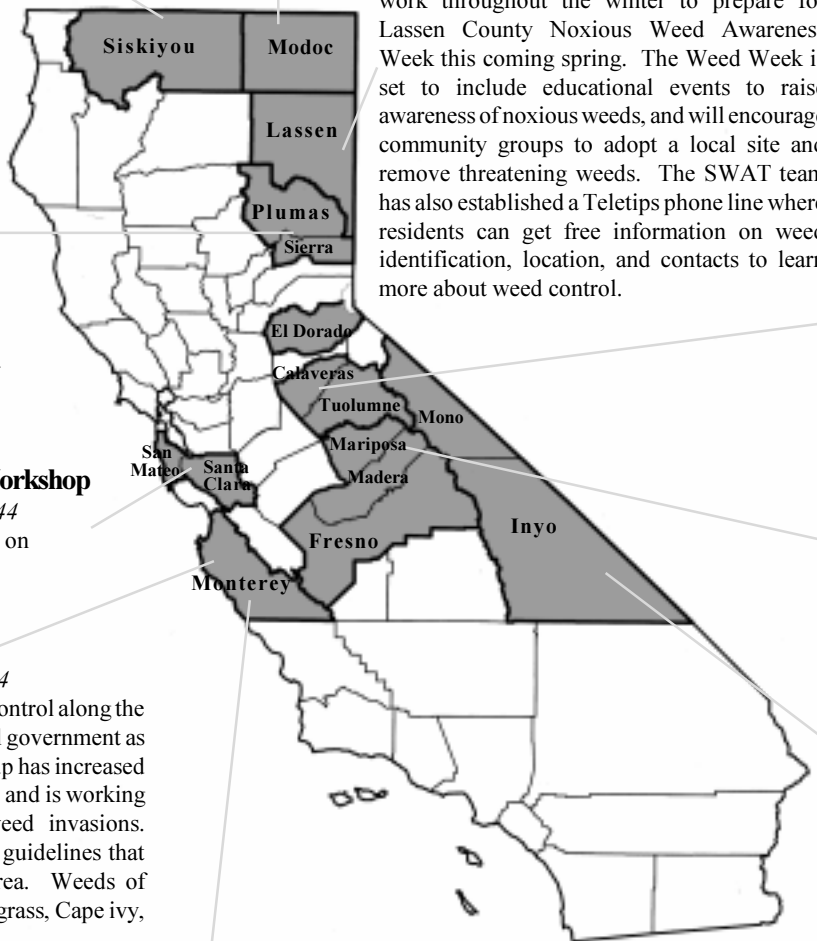
Monterey County, Big Sur Coast, *Jeff Kwasney (831) 385-5434*

This group has been working for over a year to coordinate weed control along the Big Sur coast. Member agencies include federal, state, and local government as well as the area's Property Owner's Association. So far the group has increased awareness of weed problems through an informational brochure and is working to conduct a coastal inventory to assess the extent of weed invasions. Currently, the committee is drafting an MOU and coordinated guidelines that would clarify each group's role in the weed management area. Weeds of particular concern to this group include French broom, Pampas grass, Cape ivy, iceplant, and eupatory.

Fort Ord Weed Management Area

Monterey County, Fort Ord Area, *Jack Massera (831) 663-5537*

The Fort Ord Weed Management Area was formed in 1994 when six government agencies came together to coordinate control of iceplant, French broom, and Pampas grass on the closed Ford Ord Army Base. In the past five years the WMA has expanded to 23 member-agencies working on 100,000 acres of land. Several thousand acres of French broom, Pampas grass, and iceplant have been controlled; bare areas have been strawed and seeded, and 50,000 native plants have been planted. In the coming fiscal year, State Parks plans to straw 200 acres of cleared iceplant, seed 2,000 pounds of Beach sagewort, and plant 30,000 seedlings on the beach dunes. Both State Parks and the BLM will maintain 5-person weed crews, and Monterey County Parks will take over weed control duties for three miles of heavily infested roadside. The Army will continue contracting the control of Pampas grass in the base's firing ranges.



Management Areas

El Dorado County Noxious Weed Management Area

El Dorado County, *Bill Snodgrass (530) 621-5520 and Bill Frost (530) 621-5502*

The El Dorado County Noxious Weed Management Group consists of 20 participating agencies and organizations, both private and government, including a steering committee. The group is drafting an MOU to coordinate efforts and resources. Their purpose is to raise public awareness of noxious weed problems, inventory infestations, encourage control (to include mechanical, chemical and biological control) and suppress existing infestations.

Central Sierra Partnership Against Weeds

Calaveras and Tuolumne Counties, *Marian Chambers (209) 533-5691 and Denise VanKeuren (209) 532-3671*

The Central Sierra Partnership Against Weeds (CSPAW) has grown to 20 signatories to date. A pamphlet will be available to the public this winter serving as an educational tool for basic weed identification on 12 problem weeds. CSPAW's next project will coordinate with Caltrans to begin an Adopt-A-Highway program. Already a site has been chosen to demo noxious weed control. The chosen area contains eight of the noxious weeds identified in the pamphlet and will be used to demonstrate various chemical and mechanical control methods and offer a location for educational workshops and trainings. Meetings have been held with Tuolumne CAC, USFS and local environmental groups regarding "A" rated spotted knapweed and "B" rated Dyer's Woad sites on USFS lands. Local environmental groups are considering reviewing their internal policies on Herbicide use for "A" and "B" rated noxious weeds. The potential impacts to each site by using mechanical means with numerous personnel could be more damaging to the environment from soil erosion and removal of non-target species. The use of chemical alternatives for species specific applications is well reviewed.

Southern and Central Sierra Noxious Weed Alliance

Mariposa, Madera, and Fresno Counties, *Joanna Clines (209) 297-0706 ext. 4938*

A core group representing 3 state agencies, 3 federal agencies, 2 RCDs, and the University of California met in June to begin developing a mission statement and a Memorandum of Understanding. The group agreed that the purpose/mission of the WMA would be education, communication & information exchange, inventory, and control. A major aim will be to encourage the formation of local cooperative watershed management areas under the umbrella of the Weed Alliance MOU. A smaller core group met in August to produce a rough draft of the MOU based on the June meeting notes. A grant proposal for a color weed ID brochure and web site was submitted to National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for the 1999 Pulling Together Initiative grant cycle. The next WMA meeting will be set soon for December or early January.

Eastern Sierra Weed Management Area

Inyo and Mono Counties, *George Milovich (760) 873-7860*

The formation of the Eastern Sierra Weed Management Area, a multi-partner group of local, regional, state, and federal agencies, and private associations, will enable the group to share resources and data and work together towards common goals and objectives. The group recently completed the signing of its Memorandum of Understanding, bringing together 12 signatories and roughly 8 collaborators. Working in Inyo and Mono counties, the group has special interest in perennial pepperweed and salt cedar control. A grant proposal has been submitted that may secure funding for some of these projects.

Resource Conservation Districts Hold Annual Meeting in Palm Springs

The California Association of Resource Conservation Districts (CARCD) held its annual meeting this year in the desert at the foot of the snow dusted San Jacinto Mountains. The theme this year was "Bridging the Gap", referring to the gap in awareness between urban and rural communities. The meetings focused on issues such as; administrative tools for districts, farmland protection awareness training, education/outreach programs, federal and state grants for districts, leadership training, and grant writing.

The RCDs are local organizations of landowners interested in improving land stewardship on private lands in their district. There are 104 RCDs in California. The RCDs have historically been involved in a number of activities, which are of relevance to the weed control community. They have many projects throughout the state removing invasive exotic plants such as tamarisk and arundo. These projects are usually part of an ecosystem restoration program, which involves revegetating with native plants. The RCDs are also very involved in education of people about resources issues and land management. There are granting programs administered through the Natural Resource Conservation Service and California Department of Conservation which are targeted to the RCDs, which makes them ideal partners in local education and resource management projects.

For more information contact the California Association of Resource Conservation Districts, (916) - 447-7237 <http://ceres.ca.gov/carcd/>

National Park Service *continued from page 7*

remove all small infestations on park lands, particularly those within remote watersheds; maintain containment and reduce the size of all infestations over the three years; share knowledge with other resource management agencies; and increase public awareness and involvement in controlling Cape-ivy.

The Cape ivy project builds on more than five years of on-the-ground work in the two parks. During that time the Parks prioritized removal efforts, developed successful techniques for physically containing an infested patch, and reduced total infested area. The parks will use the extra funding to hire crews for control efforts in difficult terrain, expand ongoing volunteer efforts, track containment progress in diverse habitats, track results of a variety of treatments, and share results at professional meetings and with adjacent landowners. Golden Gate NRA and Point Reyes NS have already been developing relationships with park partners, other agencies, community-based groups, and researchers investigating such issues as Cape-ivy's reproductive strategies, possible toxicity to aquatic life, impacts on bird nesting, and novel treatments including chemical and biological controls.

Redwood National Park

At Redwood National Park, the two largest projects in 1998 were control of Scotch broom invading native grasslands, and control of English ivy threatening to invade a pristine old-growth redwood forest. These projects should be sufficiently successful in 1998 to be scaled back to a maintenance level in 1999. Replacing them will be two new initiatives to remove Pampas grass around the estuary of Redwood Creek and to begin eradication of European beach grass from the coastal strand across from

Freshwater Lagoon. Each of these new projects is based upon proven methods. Diona Roja, Exotic Plant Specialist at the Park, pioneered the Pampas grass removal technique, and Andrea Pickard (currently with Bureau of Land Management) developed the European beach grass removal technique at the Lamphere Dunes ecological reserve.

Vegetation Mapping with the US Geological Survey, Biological Resources Division (USGS-BRD), in Sequoia/Kings Canyon & Yosemite Parks

Sequoia/Kings Canyon and Yosemite Parks have been working with the Western Ecological Research Center (WERC) of the USGS-BRD to survey the presence of exotic weeds in the Parks. Before 1993 WERC was part of the Research Division of the NPS in Kings Canyon/Sequoia Park. In 1985, the two botanists in the Center began placing survey plots randomly in undisturbed areas throughout the different plant communities of Sequoia/Kings Canyon, to develop a better picture of the plant species in the Park. They continued the project after the move to USGS-BRD, and by 1996 they had evaluated over 600 plots. The survey uncovered scores of new plant species but most of them were not natives, particularly below 4,500 feet. The results raised concerns about the

vulnerability of the Park to exotic species, and in the summer of 1996 WERC began a survey to locate non-native species, focussing their efforts in areas where people may have introduced them and along likely routes of invasion, such as waterways. By the summer of 1997 more than seventy other exotic species had been found. In 1998, the survey work expanded to Yosemite Park when they obtained a grant from The Yosemite Fund for mapping of non-native species.

The survey work is nearing completion in King Canyon/Sequoia Parks, at which time the results will be turned over to the Resource Management division in the Parks for the development of management plans. Combined with data gleaned from the scientific literature, the Parks will prioritize the exotic species for control, based on the level of threat they pose, their current distribution, and the availability of feasible controls. At present, the park staff focus on weed control in revegetation projects and on a few species that are currently causing problems, such as Himalayan blackberry and Arundo. ❖

Danette Woo contributed to this article. For more information: an article by Fritzke and Moore, in the current issue of Fremontia (October 1998), highlights exotic plant control efforts in these and other California national parks.

References:

- NPS-77: Natural Resources Management Guidelines. National Park Service.
- Fritzke, Sue and Peggy Moore. Exotic Plant Management in National Parks of California. In *Fremontia*, 26(4):49-53. California Native Plant Society.

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USDA-ARS Exotic and Invasive Weed Research Unit- Customers and Cooperators Meeting

USDA-ARS has been working for the past several years to expand weed control programs in the western states. In 1998 they redirected existing resources (\$250,000) from another area of research and initiated a biological control program to work on riparian weeds such as saltcedar. In doing so, Dr. Ray Carruthers was transferred to Albany, CA to organize a new research program on invasive weeds. Ray worked with existing project managers, Dr. James Young of Reno, NV and Dr. Lars Anderson of Davis, CA, to implement a new research unit, the Exotic and Invasive Weed Research Unit (EIWRU) that encompasses the work of 7 senior scientists at all three geographic locations. In addition, USDA has added new resources (\$495,000) to this group in fiscal year 1999. A new biological control scientist will be added to the Albany location as soon as a recruitment package can be initiated, and additional research technicians and operating money were provided to Reno, NV in support of the rangeland weed management program.

This new research unit met with approximately 70 customers and cooperators last October to acquire input on focusing project activities. Two and a half days of discussion highlighted the current and potential capabilities of the EIWRU and both scientific and target areas of research were discussed. Over 60 different target weed problems were identified that the group felt required additional research, however, less than 20 species were highlighted as research priorities when the group was further polled. All weed species that received priority designation by the workshop participants were evaluated in more detail by the unit scientists. Only a subset

of those projects (15 of 20) were proposed for further study at this time, as the unit scientists felt that the remaining priority target species could not be practically addressed without additional personnel and resources. Research projects were selected based primarily on the needs expressed by customers/cooperators, and the units technical ability to address relevant issues linked with each project area. Unit scientists each proposed which target plants that they felt would be appropriate for them to investigate, they then volunteered to serve as team members for cross-unit projects, and team leader for approximately two projects. The proposed project areas are listed, followed by the names of team members in the adjacent box.

Final acceptance of these project areas is the responsibility of the ARS National Program Staff Leaders who were also in attendance at the October meeting. To assist them in their evaluation, EIWRU scientists have drafted short project summary statements (2 pages each) and have forwarded them to ARS Headquarters for final review and approval. Once accepted, these project areas will form the basis for the research activities conducted by existing ARS research team. Specific research plans will be further developed in cooperation with state and university specialists once final approvals have been given by ARS Headquarters.

The members of the EIWRU are both appreciative of the support and guidance that has been provided by a large number of individuals that provided input, and are looking forward to further interactions with everyone in whacking more weeds. ❖

Proposed Project Areas

- Atlantic Cordgrass (*Spartina alterniflora*)
Lars Anderson, & Jim Young
- Brazilian Waterweed (*Egeria densis*)
Lars Anderson, Dave Spencer, & Joe Balciunas
- Cape Ivy (*Senecio mikanioides*)
Joe Balciunas & Jim Young
- Cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*)
Bill Longland, Jim Young, Bob Blank, & Debra Palmquist
- Eurasian Watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*)
Lars Anderson, Dave Spencer, & Bob Blank
- French/Scotch Broom (*Genista monspessulana/Cytisus scoparius*)
No planned activity at this time
- Giant Reed (*Arundo donax*)
Ray Carruthers, Dave Spencer, & Lars Anderson
- Hydrilla (*Hydrilla verticillata*)
Dave Spencer & Lars Anderson
- Mediterranean Sage (*Salvia aethiopis*)
- Medusa Head (*Taeniatherum caput-medusae*)
Bob Blank, Bill Longland, Jim Young, Ray Carruthers, & New Albany SY
- Mustards (*Brassicaceae*)
No planned activity at this time
- Resin Bush (*Euryops subcarnosus vulgaris*)
Joe Balciunas & Jim Young
- Russian Thistle (*Salsola iberica*)
New Albany SY will consider this project
- Saltcedar (*Tamarix spp.*)
Ray Carruthers, Debra Palmquist, Bill Longland, Jim Young, & Dave Spencer
- Scotch Thistle (*Onopordum acanthium*)
Bill Longland, Jim Young, Joe Balciunas, & New Albany SY
- Tall Whitetop/ Whitetop (*Lepidium latifolium*)
Jim Young, Bob Blank, Debra Palmquist, Lars Anderson, Bill Longland, Ray Carruthers, & Dave Spencer
- Water Hyacinth (*Eichornia crassipes*)
Dave Spencer, Lars Anderson, & Joe Balciunas
- Yellow Starthistle/ Purple Starthistle/ Russian Knapweed (*Centaurea solstitialis, Centaurea calcitrapa, and Acroptilon repens*)
Jim Young, Joe Balciunas, New Albany SY, Bill Longland, & Bob Blank

Resources and Publications:

Fremontia: A Journal of the California Native Plant Society. October 1998. Vol. 26, No. 4. Special Issue: Weeds. This new issue is devoted exclusively to invasive exotic plants and weed control in California. Over 15 articles bring together information on current research, agency work, and control efforts within the state. \$5ea, (\$3ea. for 5 or more). Contact CNPS Sacramento Office, (916) 447-2677.

Invasion of the Tamarisk! Exotic plant removal at Joshua Tree National Park. A video that offers a case-study of how one park is dealing with tamarisk invasions. Eleven minutes long, the video is a resource for staff training and raising public awareness. Free copies to the first 25 requests. Contact Jane Rodgers, (760) 367-5564, jane_rodgers@nps.gov

A Plague of Plants: Controlling Invasive Plants in Santa Cruz County. June 1998. A publication of the Wildlands Restoration Team. This booklet serves as a guide to landowners and concerned individuals seeking information on the area's worst invasive plants. Readers will find detailed information on the life history and control of 12 invasive plants. Contact Wildlands Restoration Team, (408) 423-2801. Also available on the world wide web at www.wildwork.org

Upcoming Events:

January 11-13, 1999. California Weed Science Society 51st Annual Meeting. Anaheim Hilton. Anaheim, CA. Contact Wanda Graves, (510) 790-1252, wgraves431@aol.com

January 14, 1999. 9:30am. Lassen County Noxious Weed SWAT Team Meeting. Bureau of Land Management office, Susanville. Contact Carolyn Gibbs, (530) 257-0456.

January 21, 1999. 10am. Northeastern California Province Meeting. A regional meeting to address weed control issues in northeastern California including Lassen, Plumas, Sierra, and Modoc counties. Bureau of Land Management office, Susanville. Contact Beth Corbin, (530) 257-2151.

January 29, 1999. 9am-3pm. San Francisco Peninsula-- South Bay Restoration Workshop. Skyline Open Space Preserve. Workshop sponsored by Bay Area Action in conjunction with the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District and the Santa Clara County Chapter of CNPS. It will bring together land managers and

restorationists working in the Santa Cruz Mountains bioregion. Contact Karen Cotter, (650) 329-8544, kcotter@sprynet.com

February 8-10, 1999. Weed Science Society of America Annual Meeting. San Diego, CA. Contact J. Breithaupt, (913) 843-1235, jbreith@allenpress.com

February 24-26, 1999 and March 1-3, 1999. Weed Science School 1999. Sponsored by the Weed Research and Information Center housed at the University of California, Davis. The three day course focuses on the mode and mechanism of herbicide activity in plants and the fate of herbicides in the environment. Course fee \$500. Contact Nancy Muller, (530) 752-0612, muller@vegmil.ucdavis.edu

March 9-11, 1999. Western Society of Weed Science 52nd Annual Meeting. Doubletree World Arena Hotel. Colorado Springs, CO. Contact Wanda Graves, (510) 790-1252, wgraves431@aol.com



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